

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 225204

FOR AMB. YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 5175 ACTION SECSTATE INFO CAPE TOWN
DURBAN JOHANNESBURG 01 SEP 78.

QUOTE: PRETORIA 5175

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 5175

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, SF

SUBJECT: INFORMATION MINISTRY GOES TO PIK BOTHA

REF: PRETORIA 4926

1. PRIME MINISTER VORSTER ON AUGUST 25 NAMED MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS PIK BOTHA TO HEAD THE BUREAU OF NATIONAL
AND INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION, FORMERLY THE DEPARTMENT
OF INFORMATION. BOTHA FORMALLY REPLACED DR. CONNIE MULDER
ON SEPTEMBER 1.

2. COMMENT: OBSERVERS GENERALLY REGARD THE DELAY IN
MULDER'S DIVESTMENT OF THE INFORMATION PORTFOLIO FOLLOWING
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SCANDALS AFFECTING THE DEPARTMENT EARLIER THIS YEAR AS A
FACE-SAVINO GESTURE. NEVERTHELESS, MULDER'S LOSS OF THIS
PORTFOLIO WILL COST HIM CONSIDERABLE PRESTIGE IN THE PARTY
AND AMONG THE PUBLIC. IN ADDITION, HIS BUREAUCRATIC
SWAY HAS BEEN DIMINISHED AND HIS INFLUENCE ON A RANGE OF
POLICY ISSUES, INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, HAS BEEN
REDUCED.

3. PIK BOTHA'S ASSUMPTION OF THE INFORMATION PORT-
FOLIO WILL PROVIDE HIM MORE AUTHORITY IN THE FOREIGN
POLICY FIELD AS WELL AS HIS FIRST DIRECT HANDLE ON DOMESTIC
AFFAIRS. THE MOVE REFLECTS VORSTER'S CONFIDENCE IN
BOTHA AND THE LATTER'S RISING POLITICAL FORTUNES.
EDMONDSON

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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